# CDXC Newsletter

September 1992 | *Chiltern DX Club* | Issue 80

## EDITORIAL

***(Andrew Shaw, G0HSD)***

Hello again. It is with regret that I am unable to attend this years HF Convention. It is an event above all others I enjoy and it is a great pity I will not be there with you. I hope all goes well and that the hard work of all those involved pays off.

Well, from the little I have been on the bands they seem to be desperately quiet. Conditions have really plummeted. I hope that things pick up in time for the CQ WW SSB contest in October. I was hoping to be in P29 as one of the operators of P29DX during the event, but due to situations beyond my control it is unlikely that I will have left my job by then in order to take part. Pressure of work also means I will not be able to put in a decent entry form the UK either, much to my annoyance. I wish Steve and Don G3OZF all the very best in their attempts to beat the Oceania Multi-Single record of 11m points and would urge ALL CDXC members to give them some points !!

Life is still fairly hectic here leaving little time for serious radio. I had a catastrophe when the computer suffered the effects of a thunderstorm and the hard disc died, leaving me stranded for a while. The same thunderstorm struck the house three times, and even blew a hole in next door's ceiling. Not a night to have the headphones plugged in!!

Thanks to all of you who have contributed this month. I have run out of material so PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE send anything to me for the next issue by 7th of November. I look forward to seeing you all soon if I still haven't escaped the clutches of this country in the meantime.

Best DX es 73s de Andrew

## CHAIRMAN's BIT

***(John Linford, G3WGV)***

As if you didn't hear enough from me badgering you all to help with conventions and what-have-you, I've been prevailed upon to "write something" for the newsletter!

September has been one frantic rush for me, and I for one look forward to a little less hectic life style after the Convention! This is all my own fault, of course and is to do with a little station logging program that I've been trying to complete a new release of. You'll see whether I succeeded or not at the Convention.

All in all, the bands seem to have been pretty poor, so I guess now is as good a time as any to be busy and away from the rig. I did sneak an hour or two in today though, and was rewarded with the first signals I have heard on 24MHz for a goodly time. Indeed there was even some good stuff to be had on 28MHz. It's nice to know that the higher bands haven't completely died yet.

One of the consistently strong signals on the bands has been Nigel, G3TXF operating as V85XF. How does he get such a strong signal on all the bands? You'll have to tell us Nigel! Also nice to hear was the use of full and frequent callsigns. Never any doubt where Nigel was listening either. Result: fast QSO rates, virtually no QRM on the DX frequency and no doubt that you'd worked him. Nice to see the UK showing the rest of the world how it's done. Well done Nigel!

### IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN!

Needless to say the Convention is very much in everybody's minds as I write this. The Club has a hospitality room again and is

running the GB1OTA special event station associated with the IOTA Convention during both days. Quite a number of Club members are critically involved in the event, and this is as it should be for the number one DX club of Great Britain.

I hope you managed to get along to the Convention and at the very least paid us a visit. No doubt there will be reports in the next newsletter and, of course, in the Amateur Radio press generally about it for those of you who were unfortunate enough not to be able to attend.

### QRS?

I was greatly intrigued to read Bren, G4DYOs note about CW speeds for DXpeditions in the last newsletter. Hey Ho, I thought, Bren's opened another can of worms! I suppose I ought to play fair here, and admit that I completely agree with his views. I accept that I speak from the comfortable position of being able to read most Morse that is ever sent to me, but my main reason for agreeing with Bren's view is simply that DXing is basically a competitive hobby, and like all such activities the onus is on the individual to make his performance the best. To us this means the best antennas and rigs we can afford, possibly various aids such as computer systems and so on. It should also include the best capability to receive whatever you are hoping to receive from the other end... whatever its mode.

### WHAT'S IN A NAME (2)

Interesting what happens when you ask the right questions! Following on from a brief note in the last newsletter (by that man Bren again!) I started to think about names and images and asked around a few members what they thought of the name Chiltern DX Club. Immediate reaction!!!

This needs further investigation, I decided, hence the paragraph in the bulletin last month. The interesting thing? Just how many of you have expressed an opinion on the subject. Great! Please, if you haven't given any thought to this question, review the bulletin and let us have your views. Your committee will be discussing this at its next meeting which takes place at the HF Convention.

Let us know what you think of the new bulletin idea by the way. It's only going to be useful if people with forthcoming events they want publicity for let the newsletter editor have the details, but at least it should provide the opportunity to get information out before the event.

### MOAN MOAN MOAN!!!

It's sometimes interesting to stand back and look at some of our attitudes here in the UK and compare them with those we find in other countries. It's quite amazing, in a country where virtually no-one is more than about 5 hours drive away from anywhere, the number of people who seem to think it's "too far" to make the pilgrimage to major events like our HF Convention. In the USA, folk spend 2 days getting to Dayton and a further 2 days getting back quite often, and that's just the "locals"! People flock from all over the world to it as well. Why do so few UK DXers attend the HF Convention? And then, on the same subject, how come we only get 5 people coming along to the Club's barbecue. Same last year. What happens when we ask for help with accommodation, transport... just about anything? The same few people volunteer again, adding the task to their already burgeoning schedule.

A healthy club is one that has an active membership. How about seeing if you could attend just one more Club event this year, and perhaps add positive assistance to another? The Club and Amateur Radio in the UK will be better for it!

That's it! See you on the bands.

73, John. G3WGV

## NEWS AND CORRESPONDENCE FROM MEMBERS

### ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

***(By Bill, G4ADD)***

Having been pressured by Andrew, haven't we all, to submit a little article for the News Letter. I have always fought shy and left it to the more literate. The catalyst for me has been the messages, that have been bandied about the DX Cluster, as a consequence of the series of articles on HF DXing in RadCom. I though I was doing right, by filling the questionnaire and returning it, how wrong I was. I found it quite hurtful to be labelled, because I am on the bottom of the "Honor" Roll, as a thug of the airways and to be given, collectively, such as CHEAT and THE SERVANT, if you are unfortunate enough to be a Cluster user you will have read at least some of them. I will restrain myself from expressing in words how I really feel, having done what I thought might be of some little assistance to others only to be so vilified. Instead in reply, I will give you a brief profile of myself. A profile which I would wager, is typical of most, if not all DXers.

I first became interested in the hobby in 1964 and spent five years as a SWL. Passed the RAE in 1969, remember the questions? "draw a complete circuit of a transmitter capable of operating on two or more Amateur bands inserting typical values of components!" and the format, perm any 6 from 10. It took me over two years to pass the Morse test, being successful at the FIFTH attempt! I built a TX from a PW design, 10w CW/AM with a 6BW6 in the PA for 160/80m. Connected to a Joystick antenna and loaded it up, at a TX cost of £3-7-6 in real money, the station G4ADD was in business.

My first QSO was with an old timer who had helped and advised me from the start G3HKP, who was my local vicar. Richard only operated /m so off he went in his car, about 2 miles out of the village, I recall he gave me a 4/5 report. My 2nd QSO, with another OT, paid a compliment by saying "its well seen you haven't been pirating". With a signal as bad as that things could only improve. With a lot of help it did. With the CR100 RX and my home brew TX feeding a loaded dipole supported by two sides of an old ladder, I started working my first DX. (TWENTY years later when I submitted my DXCC claim, and little thought of Honor Roll!, it included QSLs from that era).

Having saved up the pennies over the intervening two years I bought a commercial TX (the shame of it) a KW104 which gave me 100 watts SSB to the now improved antenna, I had stuck some alloy pole to the top of the old ladder sides, for increased height, and made a W3DZZ. I concentrated on 80m then and was lucky enough to work CR7, 9M2, YA and others with that set up, the YA and CR7 are still the only cards I have from those countries. The next addition to the station was a linear amp again home brew, with a bit of help. Four x PL509, 800v on the anode and on a good day 300w out the back. And I knew nothing about electronics, and still don't, I am a "Grease Monkey".

In 1978 I went mad and bought a TS820 and the CR100 from my SWL days, was made redundant. In 1984 a (very much) second hand 60ft tower was purchased, that cost me 40 quid, the hole was dug in the garden and the concrete mixed by hand. The sand and gravel was all collected in buckets and carried in the back of my old 950cc Fiesta. A TB3 was purchased, I even bought some new coax, the GPO twin telephone wire was no good for feeding the beam. I carried on trying to work the DX, subscribed to the DXNS and listened to advice.

My present station consists of the same mast and TB3 with a butternut for 80/40m the TXVR is a modest IC735 the linear is an old Hammerlund HXL1 circa 1963. A pair of 572B's that just about give the legal limit.

So having spent over 21 years building aerials, (the next project for SSB FD is a 1000ft centre fed wire at 40ft) ATU's, rigs and linears and having had some modest success perhaps you can understand why am a little angry at such ill informed comments.

Now as the HF Awards Manager I see many of the fruits of present day attitudes. Awards claims scribbled on bits of paper etc. etc. *(Ed. That goes for HF Contest logs too!!)* the worst example was submitted on what was a sheet of A4 paper ripped on two sides which said "Dear OM I want to claim the worked all continents award please send the certificate to Gxxxx QTHR" No QSL cards, No list of QSO's not even his name and address. I wrote politely to that station explaining what the basic requirements were, he never replied. I wonder if I can now look forward to seeing myself described as a ?????? in some bulletin or whatever. I have been so disgusted at the standard of submissions that come my way. There are very notable exceptions and I am sure those exceptions are not only by chance, well known DXers. I wrote a little poem, just for my amusement *(see p.7 - ed).*

I have from time to time helped DXpeditions by making a small donation. Eric G0KJW and I made a day trip to Brize Norton to meet the guys who were making what was probably, for many a year, the last DXpedition to South Sandwich. I went there to meet fellow DXers, and if possible that living legend OH2BH. I understand KL7TC flew in from Alaska for the same purpose!! HI HI.

Now that we are being encouraged not to reply on the Cluster to provocation, no matter how justified one feels, that does not in my case extend to and eyeball response. I was shocked at the local radio club recently to be accused of attempting to cadge QSO's by going to Brize and trying to curry favour by making a donation to expeditions. Those comments were made by two fellow DXers who both subscribe to DXNS, run linears, beams, one has a 4 ele at 60ft. Their distorted thinking extends as far as believing that the only reason some DXpeditions are not disallowed is that "the big guys needed it and they have the QSL's", to wit XY0. One even had the gall to complain "I see the CDXC got a plaque from the VP8SSI crew, pity they hadn't spent time in getting the QSL's out instead of that rubbish" A very heated discussion took place!

I am sorry guy's and girls but those opinions are fairly prevalent within the hobby and I think it time that those who make public statements that are factually incorrect, should as equally publicly, be rebutted. Unless of course someone's kidding me and getting easy QSO's Hi Hi. I look forward to seeing all you believers at the HFC, I trust I am amongst friends!.

de Bill, G4ADD

**From Roger, G3SXW**

A note to agree with G4DYO's comments in the last Newsletter about CW speeds in pile-ups. When operating with a rare call the whole essence is to make as many contacts as possible in the limited time available. The DX-end operator really feels an enormous responsibility to answer ALL callers: when a large pile-up is calling I feel duty-bound to contact as many as humanly possible. That leads to operating at maximum CW speeds and to being as brief as possible in the exchanges. When the other station is slow or verbose it is frustrating to think that hundreds or thousands of others are being held up by him.

It would seem that even 35 or 40 wpm speeds are manageable by the vast majority. They really only need to be able to copy their own call at such speeds. If information messages are sent by the DX station they usually QRS. Sending speed doesn't have to match but if you are sending at slow speeds then all the more reason for being ultra-brief: "R 5NN TU" is enough. It's nice to know that it's a new one for you, or to

receive your 73, etc, but surely the DX operator can assume all that!

Bren is right: those who cannot copy their own call at high speeds are at a DXing disadvantage in just the same way as those with smaller signals. It takes time but is worth the effort to become more competitive in both respects. To suggest that the DX operator slows down to accommodate the minority is pretty unfair on the majority who are waiting. Is it fair to see a one week DXpedition finish with say only 3,000 15 wpm QSOs in the log instead of 6000 at 30 wpm? That would leave 3000 without a contact/QSL card who could have been worked at the higher speeds.

Best 73 and CU all in the pile-ups.
Roger Western, G3SXW

## G0HSD - A BRIEF HISTORY OF AN EDITOR

It is nearly five years since I wrote my life story in the hallowed covers of the CDXC Newsletter. The Club was much smaller then, some thirty or so members, most in regular 2m contact within the Thames Valley. I thought it might be appropriate to write something to celebrate my five years of DXing and almost the same as a member of CDXC.

I first became interested in communication at the tender age of thirteen. I was one of those many of our fellows snobbishly refer to as "CBers". I soon realised the limitations of the QRP FM of the band and started to explore. I soon realised that it was not impossible to work great distances on 27Mhz and slowly began to think of greater things. It was then I noticed an enormous tower topped by a Christmas tree of antennas. The station of G3OZF.

Over the next few years Don guided me through the basics of the hobby and eventually taught me CW, the final hurdle on the road to being licensed. Don gave me a huge head start over many newly licensed Hams, he taught me how to chase and work DX.

After each morse lesson we scoured the bands searching for the odd piece of weak and watery DX to work, and I learnt how to work split by listening to the 3Y Peter 1 operation of 1987. By June 1987 I was fully licensed and G0HSD was aired for the first time on the 12th of June. My first QSO with the exception of Don was with LU1MFC on 15m using a TS180s barefoot through a 7Mhz dipole. I was hooked.

I took part in my first contest in the July, operating the RSGB HQ station in the IARU Radiosport Contest and once again this was to be the pattern for the next five years.

I was fortunate enough to be included on the Cambridge University Wireless Society DXpedition to St. Kilda and the Flannan Isles in he summer of 1989 which gave me my first taste of pile up operation. To say it was scary would be an understatement, but I had some valuable lessons from G3XTT and G3ZAY that put me on the right tracks. Since this, the most daring of CUWS trips so far, I have been to many other beautiful and exhilarating parts of the British Isles with Martin to put them on the air for the Deserving.

1989 also saw my first meagre entry in CQWW SSB which gave me a sobering picture of my own operator and station limitations. I endeavoured to improve both aspects over the next year and in 1990 had a very good contest using a Gem Quad and a forty meter wire beam...neither of which cost a fortune. I find contesting great fun as it is a very good test of both the aspects mentioned above. It is probably the only sport in the world where there is true international competition that every one, no matter his social class, size of bank balance, race or political persuasion can compete and have fun from his own home. I was elected to the RSGB HF Contest Committee in 1991 where in a limited role I have with the help

of others tried to encourage and support contesting in the UK.

My DXCC collecting started immediately. I set myself the target of 200 countries, Worked all Zones and 5 band DXCC by the end of my first year of operation. This I did on one hundred watts and a 2 element yagi at 25ft and a dipole for LF. I remember one club member telling me that it was practically impossible to work 200 barefoot and that I should buy a linear and not be a martyr. So I worked 250 before I bought my amplifier to make the point.

Despite being mad keen in the early years, I have never put in an application for DXCC despite having 308 worked and about 270ish confirmed. To me the fun is in the working of DX and the yarn spinning about contacts rather than pieces of paper and medals. Maybe I'm odd. I still have not sent for my VP8SSI, FO0CI etc QSLs, I will get round to it sometime.

1992 has been by far my most inactive year to date. Pressure at the office as well as taking examinations in my spare time left no time for Radio. I missed a few major expeditions including the recent Jim Smith ops (oh dear), and I had no time to construct the Newsletter, let alone chase people for input which is rather slow at materialising at the best of times. There is at the moment no let up and I can't see me operating very much in the near future.

I hope (!) that I will be able to leave my job later this year and take my long awaited trip to Papua New Guinea and the Pacific area. On my travels I hope to activate many rare places and maybe some new IOTA spots. I especially hope to brush up my CW and stir up some action from the Pacific Commonwealth for the 1993 Commonwealth Contest. After my trip is complete I will be taking up a place at Manchester University to study Ancient History and Archaeology which look like providing chances to operate from the Middle East and North Africa as well as being infinitely more fulfilling than the pensions business!

So there we have it, a tale of an almost DXer. Like many, the world demands so much of ourselves and our time one sometimes has to yield and put things to one side for a time in order to maintain ones sanity. I hope I will be able to bring the hobby back into the forefront of my life again soon.

Best 73s and good DXing,
Andrew, G0HSD

## WHAT'S IN A NAME ?

I see the old spectre of the name of the Club crept into the Bulletin. The Club did decide a couple of years ago to keep Chiltern DX Club as the formal name of the group. But let's see what you think:

### From Bob, G3VXJ

I do not think that the North California DX Foundation is viewed differently to the International DX Foundation - yet one has a parochial name and the other has not. The point is that DXers know them and what they stand for. This is frequently seen in industry where companies are named after a small town (eg. Foxboro', a world dominant process control company hails from the Foxboro' district of Boston). Outside the UK who knows where the Chilterns are?

For me the issue is for the club to be clear what its purpose is and then to communicate this to the world DX audience. Those interested in this purpose will join us. My belief is we are dedicated to promoting world wide DXing, but the atmosphere of a local DX club is worth preserving in the publications.

Lets keep the name and promote the message. If we are really so sensitive to the name, lets concentrate on the CDXC logo as the visual image of our intention.

Best 73s Bob, G3VXJ.

PS Lets not forget the goodwill we already have for CDXC in the world DX market!

**From Tony, G4SVB**

Again the Club's title comes up for discussion. 'What's in a name?"....Bulletin Issue no.1. The last time, a year or two ago the consensus was for no change but perhaps the time has now arrived to show a more international face.

*(Ed. Tony sent in some new logo designs which have been passed to the committee for consideration, many thanks Tony!)*

## PENALTT TROPHY

The Penaltt Trophy has again been won by Steve, GW4BLE. He was closely followed by Andrew, G0HSD.

The trophy, a super silver cup in memory of GW, is awarded to the member with the highest country core on 40 and 80m over a period of five selected days form his/her log.

The rules for next year's challenge along with the rules for the 1992 CDXC DX Day will be published in the October Bulletin.

**PLEASE NOTE!!**

**IF YOU HAVE NOT PAID YOUR SUBS THIS WILL BE YOUR LAST CDXC NEWSLETTER!!!**

## ODE TO THE AWARD HUNTER

**(or gissa ward)**

**By Bill G4ADD**

FIVE wards claims I did receive
Four of them duff, I did perceive
Why do they take so little bother
When they claim awards on offer

On scraps of paper they come in
The scribbled writing is a sin
Sometimes no name, is it a trick?
Just QTHR or am I that thick?

NOT scraps of card or certified list
A brief description you get the gist
They only think they can demand
And I shall jump on their command

For two hours, try to decipher
Is it this, that, or indeed either
My oh my I hear you say,
Surely this is not the way

Indeed, it isn't but some don't care
It makes me wonder who's aware
Of any rules and requirements
To prevent such acts or defilements

Why o why I sometimes wonder
They got a card from out yonder
But perhaps the cards they've got
Could well have been a big job lot

Well least that is my impression
And my words are past expression
For those who create the harassment
When claiming wards from the management.

## 1992 CANADIAN EXPEDITION BY G3ZAY & WT2O - PART 1.

The idea of a visit to the Arctic islands of Canada was triggered by Tom, WT2O, during our operation from Sheffield Island last November. Tom had discovered a special tourist fare on "First Air" - one of the three main airlines serving the North West Territories. The deal was that after paying an arm and a leg for the first two flights, all additional flights were £40 each.

At first glance it seemed that it would be possible to activate a large number of islands, but closer examination of the timetable revealed the problem; many destinations had only one flight per week so you had to spend 2 hours or 7 days there. In the end we decided to concentrate on two places; Igloolik, itself an island, and Coppermine from which we could reach islands in the Coronation Gulf.

The trip effectively began on Baffin Island at Iqaluit (EE-KA-LOO-EET), formerly Frobisher Bay, a three hour flight from Ottawa. I had deliberately arranged to arrive a day ahead of the connecting flight north to Igloolik so that I could make a few QSOs from NA047 and take a look at what may soon be the capital of the Nunavut - the autonomous Inuit territory within Canada.

Larry Horlick, VE8HL, met me at the airport during his lunch-hour and gave me a guided tour of the 3,000 strong community before dropping me at my bed and breakfast establishment where I promptly assembled the Butternut for an afternoon operating session. Propagation was good and several hundred QSOs were in the bag by about 2200z when Larry returned to give me a fuller tour of the area and show me his shack. He is fully equipped on HF (though his beam was down for maintenance during my visit) and 2 metres (where he gets occasional openings to VE3 and W8) and is an avid satellite operator. His antennas, fed by hardline, are on a small hillside some hundred feet above the house.

### IGLOOLIK

Tom, WT2O, arrived in Iqaluit on Wednesday morning and our little HS748 took off roughly on schedule for Igloolik mid-afternoon. Visibility was good for most of the trip and we had excellent views of the Baffin landscape as well as the vast floes of sea- ice in the Foxe Basin. The main islands in the Basin looked impossibly remote and unreachable but my neighbour in the aisle seat explained that he was getting off at Hall Beach, a community 50 miles south of Igloolik, to take a chartered Twin Otter across to an unmanned radar installation on Rowley Island. Clearly there are ways to get there if you have the right contacts.

The Hall Beach stop was cancelled after three failed approaches into low-level fog and the plane went straight on to Igloolik (then in bright sunshine though it had been closed by fog most of the previous week).

Disembarking from the plane we could see only a flat plateau of grey dirt and rock stretching to the horizon in all directions. The terminal cabin, however, was a hive of activity with dozens of Inuit families and children welcoming new arrivals and waving off departing family members; mostly high-school students heading back to Iqaluit. The car park was jammed with little Honda all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) - like mini-tractors with large knobbly tires - but no sight of the official taxi we were supposed to use to get to the hotel.

Fortunately the hotel manager, Elijah Evaluarjuk, had come to meet us and invited us to clamber into his pick-up truck. Throwing the bags into the back we made ourselves comfortable on top and concentrated on preventing anything slipping out as we rattled down the dirt track into the 1,000 strong settlement.

The hotel was a single storey cabin structure with a central lounge, kitchen, and dining room, and 4 bedrooms at each end.

We arrived just in time for dinner and decided to join our fellow guests for a meal before getting on the air. It was a wise decision as the food was excellent throughout our stay; ranging from local delicacies such as Arctic char (a form of salmon) to imported T-bone steak. The chef, an Inuit lady, was apologetic about having no seal blubber or whaleskin in the freezer but we assured her that we would not be too disappointed if we had to miss these highly prized local delicacies.

The Butternut was rapidly assembled after dinner and we put out the first calls on 20 metres around 0000. NA174 was QRV. The band was fine to North America but no European signals were audible until 40 opened at around 0500z. My CW CQ calls went unanswered but G4BUE seemed to be a good signal on 7005 and came back promptly when I answered his CQ. After explaining who I was and passing him G3XTT's phone number Chris quickly alerted the IOTA gang and many European QSOs appeared in the log.

We were fairly active over the next couple of days though propagation tended to be poor during the morning, allowing us time to explore the settlement. On Friday afternoon we were invited up to the Igloolik Scientific Research Centre where the Director John MacDonald filled us in on the history of the area. John turned out to be an islophile and we spent several hours discussing Pitcairn and Norfolk islands and the influence of the Royal Navy in naming both Arctic and Pacific lands.

Saturday was to be a busy day as we were expecting to be QRV from Igloolik in the morning and the Coronation Gulf in the evening. We made the final QSO from Igloolik at 0900 (1300z) and were at the airport (1km from town) by 1030 for the 1100 "milk-run" flight which links most of the communities across the north coast of the NWT. The first leg was a little over 1 hour to Pelly Bay and the second leg a further hour to Spence Bay on the Boothia Peninsula. This gave us an opportunity to look down on the islands in the Gulf of Boothia (a still un-numbered IOTA group) and we concluded that an expedition from Pelly Bay would have little difficulty in reaching a qualifying island. Alternatively, we had already been assured that Crown Prince Frederick Island was fairly easily reachable until the end of May by sledge from Igloolik - a distance of 150 miles over the sea ice through the Fury and Hecla Strait. Perhaps next year.... Anyone interested in a real adventure? (The Inuit people think nothing of such journeys and frequently travel the 50 miles to Hall Beach. If the ice freezes smoothly enough they can do it by skidoo in little over one hour.)

At Spence Bay we ground to a halt for a couple of hours while the crew investigated a hydraulic fluid leak and for a time it seemed as if we might be stranded for several days while a spare part was sent in but happily an on the spot repair proved possible and we set off for a 40 minute hop to Gjoa Haven (pronounced Joe Haven) on King William Island - NA131. After landing and swinging round in front of the terminal building, fuel gushed out of the wing-tip and I began to hope that we might have a delay for more repairs which would give us time to be QRV and add an extra island to my total, but the pilot pronounced this "normal" and we were on our way again within 10 minutes to Cambridge Bay on Victoria Island - NA006. We were running about 90 minutes late on the final leg across the Coronation Gulf to Coppermine and I was apprehensive about getting to the islands that night; especially as Tom, WT2O, was suffering from a severe stomach upset and the sea was looking extremely rough as we dropped over the coast and onto the Coppermine airstrip.

## CORONATION GULF

Our contact for this stage of the expedition was Larry Whittaker, VE8AW; a long-time resident of Coppermine, Justice of the Peace, businessman, and entrepreneur.

Larry has worked incredibly hard over the years to restore the "Fort Hearne" a 45 foot wooden sailing boat which he has converted into a thoroughly seaworthy craft equipped with GPS, radar, depth-sounders, and even an amateur station. Powered by a modern diesel engine it is capable of long voyages in the summer Arctic seas and is, as he proudly told us, the largest permanently based vessel within 500 miles in either direction along the coast.

Larry met us at the airport and assured us there was still time to get to the islands though the sea would be a little rough. I had hoped to get some fresh supplies in town but the flight delay meant that everything was closed and we would have to survive on the dehydrated rations that Tom had brought from the US. Of greater concern was the need for some fuel for my camping stove as I had already discovered that the term "methylated spirits" brought on blank looks of incomprehension. Larry came to the rescue by digging out a bottle of "methyl hydrate" antifreeze which proved to be pure methanol. I guess the weird name reinforces the "Poison" message to people who might otherwise confuse it with ethanol.

Larry took us straight to his magnificent QTH on a small bluff facing north across the Gulf and, after a short break for refreshments while he returned the borrowed pick-up he'd used to collect us, we took our bags down to the landing stage. Within a few minutes we were in one of his small boats speeding across the waters of the Coppermine estuary to embark on the "Fort Hearne".

Once under way I got on 20 metres as VE8AW/M and gave W9DC and I1HYW (still S9 at 0100) our updated arrival time. Although there were a number of qualifying islands quite close to the township, only the Couper Islands some 12 miles away offered both a sheltered anchorage for the "Fort Hearne" to stay the night and a suitable beach for landing.

The crossing was quite rough, with a short swell of up to 6 feet, but the "Fort Hearne" made short work of it and we were soon unloading the gear into the speedboat. The beach was so well sheltered that there were no waves breaking at all and Larry was able to run the boat onto the sand. We didn't even get our feet wet - a marked difference from most of the Scottish islands which are much tougher to land on.

With Tom's tent erected he was able to crawl into his sleeping bag and crash out while Larry and I assembled the Butternut. I was QRV by about 0400z with 20m open to North America and the extreme north and south of Europe. At 0500z I QSYd to 40m CW for a few European QSOs (to reward those who'd intelligently anticipated my style) and came back to a vast split-frequency European pile-up at 0530z. This was the only occasion 20m opened to Europe at this time.

By 0730z the pile-up was dying out and with the tent temperature well below zero, my hands freezing and my neck stiff from the poor operating position hunched over the torch, I decided to retire to my sleeping bag.

Larry came over the following morning and after a quick conference we decided we'd leave around sunset on Sunday night after only 24 hours on the island. With Tom still feeling unwell, a poor weather forecast for Monday, and a potential commercial charter available to Larry if the weather turned out OK, I'm sure it was the best decision. If any of you missed us, don't panic because Larry will be going back next year. He plans to take a frame tent by sledge across the ice next spring and be QRV on one of his family camping weekends.

Returning to Coppermine at full speed (Larry is responsible for positioning the local navigation buoys and claims that if he were to slow down at the crucial points the local boat owners would say he had no confidence in his work!), Larry kindly gave us the run of a brand new house that he was building.

Lacking only furniture the house had full bathroom, central heating, and kitchen facilities and we were able to relax for a day while we waited for our flight back.

The route to Ottawa was tortuous as we had to stay with First Air to qualify for cheap tickets. On Tuesday morning we flew to Yellowknife, the capital of the NWT, where we rented a car and explored some of the surrounding wilderness. Wednesday morning we took the weekly 727 flight from Yellowknife up to Resolute Bay on Cornwallis Island (NA009), on to Nanisivik at the northern tip of Baffin Island, Iqaluit at the southern tip, and finally reached Ottawa at 2200 local.

The temperatures had been a fairly uniform +1or +2 degrees Celsius during the day and -2 or -3 at night. The mosquitoes had given up during early August so all the insect repellents we had taken proved unnecessary. Propagation on 15m was non-existent, 20m was open to Europe from 1230z peaking around 1300z and again at 2000z, and although 40 was open to Europe from 2300z peaking around 0500z the European noise levels meant we could only be heard for half an hour each side of the peak.

*(To be continued)*

## RAMBLINGS OF A DX EDITOR

*DX is the embodiment*
*Of everything that's excellent*
*It has no kind of fault or flaw*
*DXers always draw the looks of awe*
- Professor Cass

Elitist? Of *course* we are, and justifiably so. Remember, there are only two types of radio amateur - those who are DXers and those who wish they were! The rubbish which has been cluttering the Cluster following the excellent series of articles in RadCom demands a simple answer to a simple question: "Why are those people in amateur radio?" And I don't mean just the G0. There is a minority (thankfully) group of amateurs who declare themselves to be interested in DXing, yet delight in criticising others who a) try their utmost to spread the word and help their fellows and b) have a demonstrably greater knowledge of the subject. The "ragchewers" criticise the DXers for having better equipment, for being members of DXCC, for being mentioned in RadCom, even for having more knowledge of the subject than themselves. Why? It must be a form of jealousy which is prevalent only in amateur radio. In many part-time interests and hobbies, especially those of a competitive nature, there will inevitably be those with better equipment, those who have more time to devote to their interests and those who develop more expertise in their chosen subjects. Ever been to a photographic club and seen the array of equipment ranging from a Kodak snap-shot to a professional Nikon? Car clubs where those running clapped out Minis enjoy the company of those with Cosworth Sierras? Shooting clubs where ancient weapons may be seen alongside the latest state of the art guns? As a fairly keen amateur and DXer myself, I thoroughly enjoy visiting amateurs with similar interests and the bigger their station the better! It gives me a huge thrill to see a big station and to meet the DXer lucky enough to own it. For all sorts of reasons one person will be "better off" than another but I have never seen them ridiculed the way they are in ham radio. Big stations are

rarely put together overnight; most DXers have built up their stations over several years, sometimes throughout a whole lifetime. One point of view aired on the Cluster - that a DXer should preferably use a homebrew transceiver and a wire antenna - was utterly ridiculous. Many DXers (the writer included) much prefer the communicating side of radio to the constructional side. I want the best transceiver I can afford and, with my limited expertise (which was sufficient to get me a high pass mark in the RAE) there is no way I could possibly build a piece of equipment approaching the quality of a modern transceiver. I have neither the time nor the inclination to build such a complex device. However, I DO enjoy messing around with antennas, although I suggest that no self-respecting DXer would ever be caught using just bits of wire. DXers run big beams - that's part of the game. If you don't - you ain't!

DXing - ie working one's way through the DXCC Countries List, contesting, county-chasing, etc - is not difficult and can provide much enjoyment for amateurs with the most modest stations providing they are prepared to work at it. Huge commercial-style stations are not mandatory but Nigel Mansell didn't become world champion with a clapped out Mini and if you take the game - whatever your game may be - seriously you'll strive for the best equipment and, more importantly, learn how to employ it to the best advantage. You will also learn from your mistakes and seek, and heed, advice from those with experience - an attitude which is sadly lacking in some Cluster users. Remember, Honor Roll is a great "leveller". No matter how big your linear or however many elements on your beam you cannot get on to Honor Roll if the countries are not QRV. After all the easy ones have been knocked off you have to wait for the DXpeditions which everyone and his brother wants to work, over and over! However, in recent times there have not been too many major DXpeditions which were not workable on fairly low power sometime during their operations and a lot of the better QRP ops worked 1S0XV, YA0RR, S21U, XY0RR, etc. The Big Guns all hit the bands during the first couple of days but when they've gone away life gets easy for the small fry and rock-solid QSOs become quite easy even with barefoot gear. The first major DXpedition I experienced was Clipperton in 1978. The first few days were carnage, but towards the end of their stay I ragchewed with them on 10m and in those days I ran an FT-101 barefoot into a TA-33 at 20 feet.

When the magic last card for Honor Roll, 5BWAZ, 5BWITU, or whatever, arrives it's time to celebrate, not disappear into a cave as some hams would wish of their luckier "friends". Did those who criticised the Honor Roll members on the Cluster not watch the Olympic Games? I'm not suggesting that everyone who reaches Honor Roll should stand on a podium and get an earful of the National Anthem, but for goodness sake let's recognise a notable achievement in our hobby and don't decry those who have genuinely achieved status.

I asked one of the "Cluster hot-gospel" brigade if he would be attending the HF Convention? "No, there are only one or two of those who will be present whom I wish to meet and I can do that any time". So, the likes of Harry Booklan,, Terry Dubson, Bernhard Stefan, Phil Weaver, Dewitt Jones, etc, etc, either don't count or can be visited "any time"? Totally incomprehensible to a keen DXer, but apparently quite normal considering the support the person claims to have received for his "anti-DXer" outpourings. Even if the term "DXer" is too elitest surely he accepts that the whole essence of amateur radio is COMMUNICATION and if you enjoy communicating with someone on the other side of the world, surely you leap at the chance of an eyeball?

We ARE DXers; let's stick together and support each other. By all means encourage other amateurs to join us but, for Heaven's sake, don't lower ourselves to the depths plumbed by jealous half-wits whose only enjoyment appears to be decrying others. The articles in RadCom were brilliant (almost tempted me to rejoin the Society!) If you don't like them.... well, I didn't like the interminable series of articles on ladder filters some years ago but I didn't start a war!

It was in the 22nd October, 1983 edition of the CDXC Newsletter that we first quoted this announcement by the Government of Bangladesh:

*"The Bangladesh Wireless and Frequency Board has decided to re-introduce an Amateur Radio Service in Bangladesh. Initially licences will be limited to S2 nationals and licences will be issued on a case by case basis"*

Since then many have tried; few have been successful, There were several apparently authorised operations which did not meet ARRL approval... and at least two which did. In recent times S21U was operated both by JA1UT and VK9NS and each operation was accepted by the ARRL for DXCC. Both these well-known DXers contributed significantly to the permanent re-introduction of amateur radio in Bangladesh and we owe them a debt of gratitude. Judging from the experience of Bob Harris, G4APV, who recently operated as S21ZD, obtaining authority to operate in Bangladesh is now fairly straightforward. Hopefully one or more of the big contest teams will organise something from Bangladesh soon...

The DXAC is discussing, among other topics, the problem of QSL card fraud. The average ham - even the average DXer - may be blissfully unaware of the lengths to which some of our more dubious friends will go to in order to obtain that prized confirmation. When 5BWAZ started there were claims by the KL7 DXers that one of the early recipients had submitted a forged card - a card for a 7 MHz contact was "amended" to read "3.7 MHz" and got past the award manager. Every QSL Manager can tell stories of fraudulent claims. When I "managed" for G4LJF's operations from D6 and 3B8 I received a number of cards claiming contacts which had never been made - not just accidents with times/dates, but claims for bands on which Ian had never operated. QSL Managers also receive various attractive "offers": *"You let me have a card for your client in return for one from one of mine"*. QSOs not necessary! There is no real answer to fraudulent QSLing but I firmly believe that the award-collecting aspect of our hobby should be divorced from QSL-collecting. If cards were collected purely for interest and not because they were required by award managers the enormous problem of over-loaded bureaux would be resolved at a stroke. NZART operates an "Honour System" and does not require QSL cards for its prestigious Worked All Pacific and other fine awards; it is high time other award sponsors followed suit. Sure, there would be the odd fraudulent claims but would they exceed those currently being made with forged or "purchased" QSL cards..... or cards obtained for the sort of "guessed" QSOs to be heard daily on the so-called "DX Nets"? I doubt it.

Just as this was being finalised news came through that amateur radio may recommence in Ghana in mid-January next year. Great news for DXers and we're all keeping fingers crossed for those who need it...

I hope everyone enjoys the HF/IOTA Convention, which looks like being the best ever.

Keep chasing that DX; the sunspots are dropping off rapidly but the Golden Days of DXing are ahead - always. See YOU in the pile-ups?

## ALBANIA REVISITED

**by Martti Laine, OH2BH**

Following the initial ZA1A activity in September, 1991, which included the establishment of amateur radio as well as on-the-air activity, the follow-up session was organised during the month of July, 1992. The initial ZA1A licence was re-activated for this continuing IARU-supported activity. The group was led by OH2BH and the following volunteer participants were involved: DF3CB, KC6KOU, OH1MKT, OH2BSI, OH2BNW and OH6EI

While on-the-air activity by the resident Albanians has exceeded all our expectations it was still a positive surprise to learn that more than 45,000 QSOs had been made by the locals since the initial ZA1A activity. Furthermore, at a scheduled 5pm get-together at Skanderberg Square *all* the resident ZAs appeared.

The ZAs had formed a sub-group approach to rotate the transceivers and antennas left by the ZA1A group in one-week turns. The rotation had included five fully operational stations. Another four Yaesu stations with Cushcraft antennas have now been presented to the Albanians with all the cables and accessories. All this material was financed by the ZA1A QSL surplus, presented by the Northern California DX Foundation, and now kept in a special account at the IARU.

During the visit it was announced that the ZA1T-series calls would be replaced by one-letter suffixes. Another 11 such calls were issued after the recent examination, making the number of resident operators now 23. These new licences are the ones from ZA1N to ZA1Y, while ZA1TAA was changed to ZA1Z allowing ZA1A to be held by the IARU programme participants. The licensing for local and foreign operators is now well defined, eliminating the earlier confusion. The "sport-licensing" no longer exists as the Vice Sport Minister lost his office. The ARRL and IARU have been officially informed concerning the current scope of licensing and authority in Albania. The issue is finished.

It was also quickly noticeable that many QSL requests sent via POB 66, Tirana had not reached the ZA amateurs. It was estimated that some 80% of the letters had disappeared. Immediate action was taken, and it was agreed that HB9BGN would collect the QSL requests and all other mail directed to the Albanians and deliver the mail on a monthly basis, through the Swissair office in Tirana to the signed members of the Albanian Amateur Radio Association (AARA). The Albanians will mail their QSL cards directly from Albania since the outgoing service seems to be reliable enough, although slow. If you wish to include a small donation to support your favourite ZA-operator or the AARA it will be greatly appreciated. Some ZA-operators may continue to use similar QSL arrangements, such as via I2MQP. If you are lacking a card from the resident ZA-operators you may wish to try these new routes. Yaesu will be furnishing them with another batch of QSL cards shortly. A training session was again concluded, now featuring many other areas of amateur radio that were not previously covered. Most serious participation was again noticeable, not only for classroom activity but also during the entire 2-week session. Many of the resident ZA-amateurs were on hand during the entire period. Some of the sessions were organised at the PTT building and some at the Technical University, where a club station is now established with two new licencees in charge. Gent, ZA1T, an assistant Professor, and the Dean, Mr Arben Tashko were most helpful in providing the

facilities for meetings and operating at the University building.

As part of the training session, participation as a team in an international contest was planned and implemented during the 1992 IARU Championship Contest. The antennas were hoisted at the University building, and four stations were activated jointly with the Albanian operators. The session included the planning for such an event, identifying the most suitable resources, the actual building of the station, and operating ZA1A in a multi-operator environment on SSB and CW. The actual operating included parallel logging with another receiver, as well as grading the accuracy and operating ability internally. Beri, ZA1TAG (now ZA1M) showed greatest operating ability and was the proud winner of a Heil BM-10 headset. ZA1A participated in the contest as the Albanian Amateur Radio Association (AARA) headquarters station, and some 6,000 QSOs were made during the 24-hour contest. Totally, ZA1A logged some 26,000 QSOs during the 2-week visit.

Albania - the double-headed eagle - is still in the middle of a major struggle to pave its way towards today's Europe and the world community. A long way is still ahead for the Albanians and the Albanian resident amateur radio operators to their interim targets of closing the gap caused by several decades of isolation. It is hoped that individual amateur radio operators and the clubs will join the IARU mission with their support for further development of amateur radio in ZA land. Good used transceivers as well as other most basic materials for building amateur radio stations is in high demand. Your contact for such donations is OH2BH, ON6WQ, DF5UG, N7NG, JA1BK, HB9BGN and I2MQP. Some activities for collecting equipment and funds are already underway, but much more is still needed.

By writing to the AARA or to any of the resident ZA operators via HB9BGN you can easily facilitate your visit to Albania, including your ZA licence and your own resident "ZA Godchild" who can lead you to your adventure of a lifetime. Your visit or even your most modest support of amateur radio in Albania is your share to the country that you were once only dreaming of.

The Albanian resident amateurs as well as the AARA (the latest IARU Member Society) extend their warmest greetings to their counterparts throughout the world.

For this session the following supporters showed their share of responsibility for making amateur radio stronger in Albania: Yaesu Corp., Cushcraft Corp., Heil Sound, INDEXA, IARU, DARC, SRAL, PA0LOU, PA3FNZ, JP1NWZ, DJ9ZB, HB9BGN, OH2BC and Swissair.

## DXCC - PROBLEMS

The following article appeared in the 1 August edition of the "W5YI REPORT":

Its baaaaack! The DXCC backlog that is, which raises several serious questions. DX Century Club is an award for contacting 100 or more foreign countries. Is this ARRL-sponsored programme spiralling out of control like a Congressional mandated welfare entitlement programme? Should the DXCC programme be down-sized because of its limited appeal to a special-interest group? Indeed, is the general membership of the League (ie the non-DXing "silent majority") being ill-served, if not short-changed, by haemorrhaging DXCC expenditures?

With the processing backlog once again growing in geometric proportions, it remains to be seen whether the Board of Directors and top management at ARRL HQ will be

courageous enough to deal with the problem without simply throwing more money at it or scapegoating staff personnel.

Reportedly, Executive Vice-President Dave Sumner, K1ZZ, received a directive from the Board at the July Director's meeting to "fix it". The previous effort to "fix" DXCC culminated in the discharge of two senior HQ staff members but only a temporary lull in the backlog itself. Will more heads roll at HQ?

To be sure, the processing backlog has had historical roots, and often parallels the ups and downs of the sunspot cycle. A major retooling of the DXCC programme occurred in 1988 near the peak of sunspot cycle 22. Like many of the entitlement programmes that in practice have become counterproductive (if not destructive) and nightmarishly costly, DXCC was undoubtedly expanded with the best of intentions (that is, to please as many DX aficionadoes as possible).

A January 1988 Board Motion - prompted by the DX Advisory Committee report - saw the League significantly expand the existing programme by authorising new 10,40 & 80m single band awards and making all DXCCs fully endorseable, all without careful consideration of the further burgeoning spending that would result.

The 10m award, as adopted, epitomises the problem and is particularly instructive. The administratively manageable staff recommendation would have required all 10m DXCC QSOs to be made on or after 21 March, 198, the implementation date of Novice Enhancement. This would give newcomers and DX veterans a level playing field and provide an opportunity for the League to welcome Novices to phone operation. This would have also served to silence critics that have argued that DXCC is designed for calcified old-timers.

Unfortunately, as if caving in to a political action committee, the Board did not have the will to say "no" to the myopic DX Advisory Committee. So the directors overrode the staff recommendation, making 10m DXCC (as well as the new 80 & 40m DXCC) retroactive to 15 November, 1945. Those who had shoeboxes full of vintage QSLs were able to leap to the head of the class, and those bundles quickly found their way to ARRL HQ. A backlog situation started practically overnight, and expenditure for labour-intensive QSL-card processing sky-rocketed.

In the name of making DXCC rules politically palatable to these vested interests, the Board failed to address or verify long-term funding requirements for this expanded programme. In effect, they created a monster for which they have refused to take responsibility. There are now 12 separate DXCC awards, all incrementally endorseable after the minimum 100 countries, plus the DXCC Honor Roll.

Over the years, ad hoc weekend "card parties" have been held to address temporary DXCC processing backlog situations. Subsequent to the drastic growth of these DXCC entitlements, League management elevated the card-party concept to new heights. When the processing backlog of both new and endorsed awards reached unacceptable proportions in late 1990, top management responded to pressure from the Board by demoting and then later terminating Communications Manager John Lindholm, W1XX. (DXCC Manager Don Search, W3AZD, would meet a similar fate in March 1992) and then dragooning every available body (ham and non-ham alike) from other departments at HQ to assist in the QSL card checking and DXCC application processing effort during regular business hours.

Although the League's mission of preserving and promoting the Amateur Radio Service goes well beyond checking QSL cards, approximately 50% of the over 100 employee HQ workforce was engaged in DXCC processing at one time or another in 1991! DXCC had been budgeted for $100,000 per annum, but the real costs may

be double or triple that number in view of this massive deployment of personnel.

The July, 1991, issue of The ARRL Letter reported that the DXCC backlog was "essentially a thing of the past" and that full computerisation of the DXCC awards programme would go into effect 1 October, 1991. But some DXCC observers question whether the backlog was ever eliminated in 1991.

Be that as it may, in 10 July, 1992 issue of The DX Bulletin, published by Chod Harris, VP8ML, reported that DXCC processing had fallen far behind again. Presumably based on figures provided by HQ, Harris wrote that as of 26 June, 1992, the DXCC desk was processing applications received on 6 February, 1992, and were backlogged as far back as 30 December, 1991 in returning QSL cards to applicants and sending out endorsement stickers. Also according to Harris, the DXCC desk had 3718 pending applications with over 200,000 cards to check and enter into the DXCC data base.

Clearly, the computerisation of DXCC has not been the panacea as originally trumpeted. According to sources, Sumner reported to the Board that the backlog's reemergence was caused by the original paper records (many, if not most, of which are several decades old) being faulty. Traditionally, though, great care had been taken in keeping the individual DXCC paper records accurate and precise each time the DXCC member submitted and endorsement. The actual problem may be just the opposite, ie the labour-intensive computer record key-stroking of existing DXCC records.

Supposedly, when a DXCC member submits an endorsement application, his entire record to date is entered in the League's mainframe computer ("backfilling"). This backfilling puts a horrendous, if not unfair, amount of work on the shoulders of permanent DXCC staff. To be sure, DXCC can be very esoteric and intricate, what with new and deleted countries, permissible (and non-permissible) DXpeditions, similar prefixes... and all.

For a brief time, the League permitted individual members to keyboard their own DXCC record on a floppy disk for submission to HQ. This was abruptly terminated, however, evidently because the members were making too many errors.

If DXers in the field were making too many errors, how can a non-licenced secretary or a clerk at the HQ level be reasonably expected to maintain the integrity of the process? Sources tell us many computerised records are a shambles as a result of data entry errors (including incorrect prefixes, deleted-country miscues, countries miscredited, number of endorsements not adding up correctly, etc) by HQ support personnel understandably unfamiliar with ham radio generally and DXCC particularly. (Readers who have received printouts of their DXCC records fraught with errors are urged to share their war stories with the W5YI Report).

The problem, then, seems not to be the original paper records, but in the transfer of information from paper to computer. Attempted correction of inaccuracies in their individual DXCC records by DXCC applicants only compounds the backlog problem which gets worse and requires more staff and money to unsnarl. And perhaps more career-killing scapegoating.

The Board and top ARRL management continue to treat the symptom of the problem by an unfocussed throwing of money and manpower at DXCC, especially in recent years, rather than a comprehensive review of the programme itself. Is the average League member, who does not participate in DXCC, getting his/her money's worth? Indeed the general member of the League may be getting hoodwinked by having so much of his dues allocated to the DXCC programme way out of proportion to the number of active DXers within the League membership.

It appears that the League is offering too much programme to too few members.

DXCC observers say the solution is to downsize. The Board needs to have the boldness to reduce the programme to a manageable level which would probably mean a general, mixed-mode DXCC award only, with the sunsetting of single-band and single-mode awards.

It's uncertain whether the ARRL Board could stand up to a vocal special-interest group and implement a desperately needed cutback in excessive DXCC benefits - just as the US Congress needs to overcome similar pressure from special interests and address the huge federal budget deficit. Like Congress, however, the League's Board has often been tentative in addressing controversial issues directly, preferring to politicise, procrastinate and point fingers. (Sorry if I'm overly controversial on this matter. Comments are welcome to Fred, W5YI).

The contents of this article were made known to ARRL by Bob Winn, W5KNE, editor of QRZDX and David Sumner, K1ZZ, Executive Vice-President responded thus:

"Is the DXCC programme bankrupting the ARRL?" The answer is an unequivocal NO. The League's financial statements are a matter of public record; you can look in May QST and see that we're doing fine financially.

Fred Maia is entitled to his opinion as to the relative importance of DXCC, and the proportion of the League's resources to which the programme should have claim. And I think nearly any reasonable person would agree that in the short term, we're having to devote more resources to the programme than we would be comfortable committing for the long haul. On the other hand, DXCC is by far the most significant awards programme in all of Amateur Radio, and is increasing in popularity. In my opinion, there is no question but that it merits continued support.

I have to disagree with Fred's observations concerning the significance of single-band awards in contributing to the backlog. What the creation of the single-band awards for 80, 40 and 10m did accomplish was to force us, finally, to confront the issue of computerisation of DXCC records. It made no sense at all for a participant to have to submit the same card multiple times for credit toward different kinds of DXCC, but that's exactly what the old, manual system required. This had to change.

In the long run, creating a later start for the single-band awards would not have avoided the problem. It would have provided another critical data element to be checked on each and every credit. On top of that, it would have burdened DX stations, QSL managers and volunteer QSL bureau workers with having to deal with requests for repeat QSOs and QSLs.

We knew the conversion of the old records would be painful. We didn't know exactly how painful until we got well into the project, because we thought, as Fred says, that the paper records were accurate. Most of them are. However, enough problems were hidden in the old filing cabinets to make resolving them a somewhat more formidable task than we'd expected. I don't offer that as an excuse, nor to shift the blame to earlier generations; in retrospect, it's obvious we should have expected that such problems existed because they're inevitable in any manual system that lacks double-entry or other means of error-trapping.

Now that the DXCC Branch staff is well up the learning curve on the new system, the computer records being created are quite accurate - at the very least, as accurate as the old, manual records. If errors do creep in they can be caught by the DXCC member, who gets much better feedback now than before. While we're striving for 100% accuracy, we don't mind being told about an error by the participant

because then it can be corrected, immediately and forever.

Right now we have two big challenges in DXCC. One is to whittle down the backlog of pending applications. We'll deploy temporary resources to do that to the extent we're able to use them efficiently without disrupting other operations. The second, and in my opinion more important, challenge is to continue to move in the direction of field checking and computerisation. A field-checked application provides better service to the member, and involves less work for staff (and consequently, less expense). I see no reason why, ultimately, members shouldn't be able to submit DXCC applications on disk or via other electronic media, reducing the amount of keyboarding that has to be done at Headquarters.

Members have been extraordinarily patient with us, in part because they understand the ultimate benefits of the conversion and in part because they realise the rest of the League's mission can't be suspended while we work exclusively on DXCC. The Board also has been extremely supportive; I don't recall the Board ever denying a staff request for resources for DXCC.

With continued support, and with the fine DXCC Branch staff working as they are, there's no reason we can't put the backlog behind us and provide an unprecedented level service to DXCC members - at a reasonable cost.

# 1B1NCC

Towards the end of June a station signing "1B1NCC" was very active on HF - often on or very close to 14260, the IOTA Net frequency, and therefore very likely to be noticed - claiming to be operating from the Turkish republic of Northern Cyprus. It was so obviously an "illegal" station that the DX media ignored it as the work of pirates, or some sort of leg-pull. The local 5B operators were keen to put the word around that the station was not fully authorised and the editor of DX News Sheet received the following letter from the Cyprus Amateur Radio Society on 27 June:

*"It has come to our attention that an operation has commenced, on amateur radio HF bands, under the callsign 1B1NCC; this station purports to be operating from the "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus". As you are probably well aware, Cyprus has been the victim of Turkish aggression since 1974, and continues to this day to have 37% of its territory under the forcible occupation of the Turkish army. Despite repeated UN resolutions, many of which are similar in language to those of the UN declarations on Kuwait, and the vehement opposition of the United Kingdom, Turkey continues to occupy the northern part of the island. It is from this occupied area that 1B1NCC (as well as other stations with the 1B prefix), allege they are operating, an area unrecognised by the world community, with the exception of Turkey.*

*We would therefore like to request your help, as well as that of the RSGB in general, in making clear to British amateur radio operators that this station is operating illegally and has no authorisation whatsoever from the Republic of Cyprus. As such, it is the wish of the Ministry of Communications in Cyprus THAT UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD COMMUNICATION BE UNDERTAKEN WITH THIS STATION, which is an illegal pirate and has no licence whatsoever from the aforementioned Ministry. Moreover, we understand, to our extreme dismay, that a British amateur radio operator is acting as QSL manager for this station, and that a British licencee and citizen is the operator of*

*the station. This, needless to say, we believe to be a gross insult not only for us but also for the United Kingdom in general, a nation with which Cypriot hams have developed cordial and close ties over the past three decades, and which has repeatedly voiced its opposition to the recognition of anything as far as regards the pseudo state."*

An appropriate notice was inserted in DX News Sheet and duly copied by other DX bulletins. The editor of DX News Sheet received a telephone call from Mr Zaim Tomer, G7IYV who, it transpired, had been one of the operators - the others were Mr Hasan Soyer, G0ITX and Mr Soyer Hasan, G0ETX. Zaim's line was that there were a number of radio enthusiasts in the TRNC who, despite repeated attempts over the years, had been unable to obtain authorisation for amateur radio activity. The three amateurs involved had negotiated with the local authorities (ie Turkish) and had secured permission to set up and operate a club station, 1B1NCC. Additional information was provided in a letter to DX News Sheet from the operators involved on 28 July:

*"We refer to our discussions on 9th July, 1992 regarding your news item in the 1523th edition of DX News Sheet on 1B1NCC. As explained earlier we were very surprised and somewhat upset that this news item appeared without any form of check or scrutiny, at least with the stated QSL manager prior to publication. The true facts about this station are as follows:*

*1B1NCC is the club station call sign of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus Amateur Radio Society. This station is licenced by the Telecommunications Authority of the TRNC.*

*Amateur Radio in TRNC is still in its infancy. For some time radio enthusiasts in TRNC have been lobbying the authorities to permit amateur radio activities and establish licencing procedures. When their efforts came to fruition earlier this year, we, a group of UK licenced radio amateurs, donated some modest radio equipment to their club and volunteered to assist in manning the station. A few of us hope to return to North Cyprus during holidays to continue to help train local radio amateurs and support the development of their clubs and the hobby of amateur radio in any way possible.*

*Unfortunately from the first day onwards 1B1NCC suffered malicious QRM of various kind from 5B and SV "amateur" radio stations. These ranged from political statements, CW and RTTY transmissions being sent over our QSOs to continuous whistling, threats and general abuse. Several messages were also sent world-wide via the packet radio network claiming 1B1NCC to be a military station using high power when in fact 1B1NCC had only two "barefoot" transceivers with simple dipole and vertical antennae. Even the Greek Cypriot authorities became involved and sent messages to amateur radio societies and publications in various countries referring to 1B1NCC as a "pirate" station operating without a licence which should not be contacted.*

*It is a fact that Greek Cypriot authorities have no jurisdiction within the boundaries of the TRNC where the Turkish Cypriots (population 160,000) have been living in peace and safety for the last 18 years under their own government.*

*All of the above occurred without any provocation whatsoever from 1B1NCC. Throughout these events 1B1NCC operators kept calm, ignored the QRM and invited the offending 5B and SV stations to observe good conduct and stop their actions of political propaganda. At times the conduct of 5B and SV stations took such an ugly dimension that 1B1NCC operators could not tolerate the abuse of the amateur bands in this way any further and chose to go QRT for a while.*

*It is no secret that the Cyprus problem remains unsolved mainly due to the Greek*

*Cypriot side not being able to accept the equal rights or even the existence of the Turkish Cypriots on the island. Over the years efforts to find a solution have been repeatedly hindered as the Greek Cypriot authorities continue to portray themselves as the legitimate government of the Republic of Cyprus. The fact that Turkish Cypriots were co-founders of this Republic in 1960 and were forcibly removed from government in 1963 is never mentioned in the Greek Cypriot rhetoric. Even less mentioned is their attempt to unite the island to Greece in 1974 with the help of the then Greek junta (widely known as Enossis). This tragedy was averted by the intervention of Turkish troops in July, 1974.*

*To date most people still do not know that when the Republic of Cyprus was formed in 1960 Britain, Turkey and Greece were the signatories to the treaties and were named in the Constitution of the Republic of Cyprus as guarantors of the sovereignty of the Republic. As such each country had the right to intervene solely or jointly to maintain the sovereignty of the island. In the face of a genuine threat to the sovereignty of the island and the safety of its Turkish Cypriot inhabitants, Turkey exercised this right in July 1974.*

*Our Greek friends prefer to refer to this as the "Turkish invasion". As far as they are concerned the territory of the TRNC is the "occupied territory" and the Turkish Cypriot community is a "non-entity". Following this train of thought it is very hard for them to come to terms with anything that Turkish Cypriots achieve in any field. This behaviour has been demonstrated most aggressively once more during the 1B1NCC operation.*

*Currently talks are underway to find an amicable, long-term solution to the Cyprus problem. Turkish Cypriot radio amateurs support these efforts wholeheartedly and believe that open confrontation as experienced during the 1B1NCC operation achieves very little in promoting the much needed trust and confidence between the two communities. Whatever political views one might subscribe to one thing is quite clear in the minds of the Turkish Cypriot radio amateurs. Amateur bands are not the forum to express one's political views and resorting to wilful, malicious QRM and untruths is certainly deplorable.*

*As to the use of the "1" series call sign, the Turkish Cypriot authorities had very little choice in deciding which call sign series to adopt for amateur radio purposes. Currently all ITU allocated call sign series for Cyprus (5B, P3, C4, H2) are under Greek Cypriot control and have been used one way or another. If one looks at the history of events over the last 32 years, there isn't a single call sign issued to a Turkish Cypriot since 1960 by the so called "government of the Republic of Cyprus". This is in line with policies pursued against Turkish Cypriots in all other fields. On the other hand hundreds of callsigns have been issued to Greek Cypriots during the same period, sometimes without any examination or scrutiny eg after 1963 and 1974.*

*Therefore, although it is not ideal, the only possibility open to the Turkish Cypriot authorities was the use of an unofficial call sign examples of which presently exist or have existed in the past eg 1A, 1S, 1M.*

*Overall our first 1B1NCC operation was very successful. Despite the difficulties thousands of contacts were made with approximately 65 different countries, even though the main emphasis was not placed on the number of contacts but on training the local radio amateurs and giving them exposure to the amateur bands. Currently consideration is being given to apply for DXCC listing. It is envisaged that if it went ahead this would be a very difficult application that would require a great deal of support from all quarters as it would certainly receive vigorous objections from the Greek Cypriots and those who support them.*

*Whatever happens 1B1NCC will continue to operate in the future by its*

*enthusiastic club members and before too long other call signs may be allocated to individuals as they gain sufficient operating experience to satisfy the licensing conditions and examinations set by the Telecommunication Authority of TRNC.*

*We hope that the radio amateurs world wide will appreciate the difficulties experienced by the Turkish Cypriot radio amateurs and pledge their support in welcoming a new member to the family of radio amateurs without being involved in politics. We believe knowing the true facts will go a long way to help in this matter.*

*Already many messages of support and letters have been received by us from stations who witnessed the attacks on 1B1NCC, took a few minutes to consider the situation and saw through the unfounded Greek Cypriot claims.*

*It is unfortunate that your publication was very quick in taking up the organised propaganda material of the Greek Cypriots and condemn 1B1NCC, probably unaware of the motive. DX News Sheet is one of the best sources of information read by many radio amateurs not just in the UK but abroad and as a result you can be rest assured that the news item in question would have done untold damage to the reputation of the newly founded 1B1NCC club station, its operators and the advent of amateur radio in the TRNC.*

*Now that you have been made aware of the true facts behind the case, we expect sufficient coverage will be given to the subject in your next issue with a view to rectifying the harm caused, not forgetting the condemnation of the unacceptable and illegal behaviour of causing deliberate interference on the amateur bands by 5B and SV stations."*

At the time this letter was received an approach was made to David Sumner, K1ZZ, Executive Vice President of the ARRL and IARU official, to see if the 1B1NCC operators had sought international recognition. He replied as follows:

*"As far as I know, we have seen no documentation concerning 1B1NCC.*

*However, inasmuch as the authorisation, if there is one, for its operation is said to have come from an entity that enjoys no international recognition as a government, it is fairly safe to assume that no DXCC credit will be given for contacts with 1B1NCC or any similar station."*

An appropriate note was published in DXNS 1528 including relevant details from the letters from both the 1B1NCC operators and David Sumner. Zaim, G7IYV, later telephoned DXNS and a prolonged discussion ensued. It was suggested to Zaim that, although the motives of those concerned were rational their methods were not and that advice should be sought from RSGB and IARU before contemplating further operations using an illicit callsign on the internationally controlled amateur bands. Hopefully the matter will be resolved and we can welcome new, properly-licensed, friends to the amateur bands.

## CDXC CONTEST NEWS

### IARU HF CHAMPIONSHIP

G3OZF, G0MFO and G0HSD manned the RSGB HQ stations for this contest in mid July. GB4HQ, GB5HQ and GB6HQ were aired by CDXC on behalf of the HF Contests Committee in order to compete favourably with other national society stations throughout the world.

The combined score of the three stations was well over 1.7 million, mush higher than previous years and should put us a little further up the table this year.

If you are interested in joining in CDXC contesting events please keep an eye out in the Newsletter for details! For more general help and advice why not buy a RSGB Contest Guide from the HF Contests Committee Stand at the HFC or write to G4BUO QTHR enclosing £1 plus a large SASE.

## CDXC COMMITTEE 1992/3

**PRESIDENT:** Martin Atherton, G3ZAY, 41 Eniskillen Rd, Cambridge, CB4 1SQ. Tel. 0223-424714

**CHAIRMAN:** John Linford, G3WGV, Canberra Lodge, Heath Ride, Fichampstead, Berks RG11 3QJ. Tel. 0734-733745

**VICE CHAIRMAN:** Keith Evans, G3VKW, Little Field House, Bolney Road, Ansty, Haywards Heath, West Sussex. Tel. 0444-412414.

**SECRETARY:** Alan Jubb, G3PMR, 30 West Street, Great Gransden, Sandy, Beds. Tel. 0767-677913.

**TREASURER:** Ron Glaisher, G6LX, 279 Addiscombe Rd., Croydon, CR0 7HY. Tel. 081-654106 Fzx. 081 6543631.

**NEWSLETTER EDITOR:** Andrew Shaw, G0HSD, The Rectory, Church End, Bledlow, Princes Risborough, Bucks. HP27 9PD. Tel. 08444 2422

## WELCOME!

I'd like to welcome the following new members to CDXC:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| BRS47426 | Chris Gibbs | (Camberley) |
| G4LDS | Chris Baker | (Burnham on Crouch) |
| G4UXG | Jon Dew | (Wokingham) |
| G3BBR | Ken Wheatley | (Redhill) |
| G0KTN | Trevor Smithers | (Melksham) |
| G3EZZ | John Eaton | (Bridlington) |
| G4MUT | Terry Hackwill | (Reading) |
| G4IJW | John Woodham | (Bristol) |
| G3XYP | David Rollitt | (Lincoln) |
| G3KIW | Geoffrey Tanner | (Bucklebury, Berks) |
| G4AFJ | Geoffrey Dover | (Kirkby Mallory, Leics) |

I hope that you will all enjoy being members of CDXC, that you get lots out of the Club, and that you put plenty back, too!
I hope to see you all at the HF Convention.

Good DXing. Alan, G3PMR, Secretary.

## CQ WW CONTESTS

Do you enter any of the CQ World Wide contests? If you do, then remember to always mention your club affiliation as CDXC, so the club can benefit from the points too! Frankford Radio Club seem to have this off to a fine art as the results show every year. Let's help CDXC onto the map in the same way.